



Manchester  
Communication  
Primary  
Academy

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# Manchester Communication Primary Academy

Ramadan & Eid Policy

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2026 - 2027

## Approval History

This document has been prepared within	Manchester Communication Primary Academy (MCPA)
Date of last review	December 2024
Date of next review	December 2025
Date of Approval	November 2024
Person Responsible for Policy	Admissions Officer
Owner	MCPA LGB
Signature of Approval	

## Revision History

Revision Date	Summary of changes	Owner/Editor
Sep 2022	Dates changed to reflect the new academic year	ARE
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dates of application and appeals has been added</li><li>Information on how to apply has been updated</li></ul>	AW
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dates changed to reflect the new academic year</li></ul>	ARE

## **Aims and Objectives**

- - To provide a safe environment for children and staff who wish to fast during part or all of the month of Ramadan.
- - To ensure the proper care of children is maintained and keep parents informed if their child is unwell.
- - To further develop understanding of the different faiths represented in the school population.

## **Introduction**

*This policy was devised in consultation with a range of members of the school community (including representatives from the Council of Mosques) and the local Muslim community.*

MCPA is very proud of its diverse population, and it is in this spirit that this guidance has been produced, which also links to the British value of mutual respect and tolerance:

*Recognising and respecting the differences of others, including their faiths and beliefs*

It is important to remember that the Muslim community at MCPA is diverse and that customs and practices may vary between and within different traditions and followers of Islam.

The school has Muslims from two main denominations – Sunni and Shi'a. The vast majority of Muslim pupils in our schools are Sunni. Both groups of Muslims use the same Qur'an, but there are differences in the way they practise their faith. Our Muslim communities originate from a variety of continents and countries and so may practise their faith in different ways, both cultural, as well as scriptural. As a school, we know a Muslim family's heritage can help us to understand differences in the ways in which individuals practise their religion.

## **1. Ramadan and fasting (sawm)**

### **What is the month of Ramadan?**

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic (lunar) calendar, known as "the month of fasting". Each Islamic month is either 29 or 30 days and therefore the year is shorter by either 10 or 11 days in comparison with the Gregorian calendar. In Britain this means that the hours of fasting vary from year to year.

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of the faith and a key observance for most healthy adult Muslims and those maturing towards adulthood.

The Arabic word sawm means 'to abstain', and during Ramadan most Muslims are expected to abstain completely from both food and liquid—including water—from dawn until sunset. Muslims observing the fast, expect to carry on with their daily life, learning ways to cope with the challenges whilst growing in spirituality.

This year, Ramadan (the 9th Islamic month) is likely to begin on 28th February 2025 and Eid-ul-Fitr, marking the end of Ramadan, is likely to be celebrated on March 30th or March 31st. These dates can vary subject to sighting of the new moon and local announcements.

It is the practice for Muslims to rise before dawn and to share a light meal (sahur or sehri) with the family. Having stated the intention to do so, fasting then takes place during daylight hours. Just before the end of the fast at dusk, people will return home in order to share an evening meal (iftar) to which family and friends are often invited.

Some Muslims gather at the mosque and, immediately at the end of the fasting day, share a light snack (sometimes including dates and water) as did the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with his companions over 1400 years ago.

Tarawee prayers are performed during the month of Ramadan. Many men and some women attend prayers at the mosque (or at home) which last about an hour or 1 ½ hours each evening. Combined with waking up early before dawn to eat breakfast, this may lead to Muslims feeling very tired during the month of Ramadan.

It is believed by Muslims to be the month in which the first verses of the Holy Qur'an were revealed by Allah (God) to the Prophet Muhammad (May Peace Be Upon Him) via the Angel Jibra'il (Gabriel). During the 'Night of Power' (Laylat ul-Qadr) which comes on an odd numbered night during the last ten days of Ramadan, Muslims remember the occasion when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was given the first words of the Qur'an to recite: the title Qur'an means 'recitation'. (Words continued to be revealed to the Prophet for the remainder of his life). Some Muslims spend the last ten days of the month in the mosque (a practice called itikaf, 'seclusion') during which they can pray and read the Qur'an in the company of others.

The sighting of the new moon at the end of Ramadan marks the start of the tenth month, Shawwal, which begins with the festival of Eid ul-Fitr (the festival of breaking the fast). Coming straight after the austerities of Ramadan, Eid ul-Fitr is a joyous occasion (it is forbidden to fast on Eid ul-Fitr). After prayers, often held in the open air, people give presents, wear new clothes and visit relatives. The greeting is Eid Mubarak, 'happy Eid', which is also printed on greetings cards exchanged at this time. Just before Eid ul-Fitr, Muslims must give money (fitrana) so that those who cannot afford to do so are also able to celebrate the festival.

#### **At what age do children start fasting?**

Fasting during Ramadan is only obligatory from the age of puberty. However, younger children frequently wish to emulate their elders, and so Muslim children will start to observe individual days of fasting from an early age. They will be proud of this and their elders will often encourage them and praise them. This practice is viewed as weaning them onto their adult religious obligation. The level of observance will, of course, depend upon the particular individual, family or community. Even if children are not fasting they might be more tired because they are getting up earlier, going to bed later and participating in more family and community events. We do not encourage children in KS1 to fast. We understand that children in years 4,5 and 6 may wish to participate and will try to keep at least some or part of the days as fasts.

There are exemptions to the Ramadan fast. Those who are ill, frail or elderly, who are travelling and pregnant or nursing women need not fast if it would be harmful to their health. Menstruating women should not fast. Such people will be expected to make up for days missed later through fasting or giving financially to the poor.

#### **What do Muslims gain from fasting?**

It is important to understand the positive aspects of this month for Muslims – both children and adults. Far from being a difficult time of hardship, Ramadan is anticipated with enormous excitement and the experience enjoyed by young and old. The month provides encouragement to uphold good character, to refrain from anti-social behaviour, (including being unkind to other people by telling lies, swearing etc.) and to strengthen spiritual development and one's relationship with God (Allah). Family and community togetherness is strengthened and supported through a unifying experience with Muslims all around the world. It is also a time for increased social responsibility, for empathy with, and giving to the poor and needy. In summary, Ramadan is a time for striving for the best in all aspects of life.

#### **What are the implications of Ramadan on Curriculum and other school activities?**

**Physical education and sporting activities** - There are no sporting or physical activities that are forbidden during Ramadan. Teachers are advised to use their discretion regarding physical education during Ramadan. Some Muslim pupils who are fasting, for example, may feel weak and teachers could decide that certain strenuous activities need to be modified for them during this period. The season of the year during which Ramadan falls will have a bearing upon such decisions.

At MCPA, parents are aware of the days when the class has PE or swimming, or when, for example, a sports day will take place so that they are able to decide whether their child will be allowed to fast on that day.

**Swimming** - Fasting is an intentional activity designed to please Allah (God). Muslim scholars teach that the fast is not broken if someone accidentally swallows water during swimming. The fast is only broken if this is done intentionally. Pupils may need reassurance about this.

**Music, Singing and Dance** - Many Muslims will particularly try to avoid such activities during this month and instead devote time to more spiritual activities. This practice should be respected where possible by schools.

At MCPA, the music curriculum has been mapped out so that children learn about music in Islam during Ramadan. The PE curriculum is mapped not to cover dance during this time.

**Lunchtime arrangements** - We support the spiritual dimension of our Muslim pupils' lives by offering them appropriate support at school during Ramadan. Pupils who are fasting will not be excluded from clubs or activities or be sent home or out of school at lunchtime.

Members of staff are designated to supervise pupils who are not eating dinners and provide a room for prayer. This is equipped with prayer mats (musallah) provided by the school or pupils may wish to bring their own prayer mats to use in school. The direction of prayer is shared with the children. A Muslim member of staff or senior pupils may be happy to take a lead in organising prayer sessions at lunchtime. It is usual for males and females to pray separately, although where this is not possible they may pray together, at opposite ends of the same room.

School staff recognise that pupils wishing to pray will need to make their ablution (wudhu) which can be done in the usual washing area. Cleanliness is an important aspect of Islam, and pupils using school facilities in this way should be encouraged to take responsibility for their tidiness.

**Doesn't fasting make children sleepy, tired and listless and won't it affect their ability to work well at school?**

Fasting can affect children's physical stamina and concentration levels and Muslim parents greatly appreciate schools' concern for their children during this special month. However, even if children cannot apply themselves in the same way as during the rest of the year, it is felt that the overall benefits of Ramadan for the individual, the family and the community are great. At MCPA, we will be sensitive to these views and will treat children who are fasting, and their families with respect.

**What is the responsibility of a school if a pupil becomes ill or suffers as a result of fasting while at school?**

The responsibility which a school should exercise towards fasting pupils is no different to that applying to any pupil in the school. A school will obviously want to be sensitive towards pupils who are fasting, but Muslim scriptures are clear that if you are not able to operate normally (at school or work), you are not well enough or old enough to be fasting. Fasting is something that no-one should really know about, you should be able to lead a normal life.

Given that the obligation to fast does not override health considerations, a pupil who faints can be offered water if judged appropriate by a suitably qualified first aider or if the pupil requests it. If the pupil does not want to take water, the school should consider whether the home should be contacted.

If a person accidentally bleeds or vomits, the fast day will still count, in the sense that the day will count as a day when their intention was to fast all day. A Muslim pupil might need to be reassured that this is the case.

If there are safeguarding concerns about a student, schools have an overriding safeguarding duty and should apply professional judgement and common sense in each case.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the DfE's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education as: "...protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes."

### **Pupils entitled to free school meals**

Free school meals is an entitlement for all eligible pupils.

At MCPA, we will consider ways of ensuring this is honoured by putting a bag together for fasting pupils to take home (if they wish), or recognising this entitlement in some other way.

### **Eid-ul-Fitr**

The month of Ramadan ends with the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr. The month begins with the sighting of the new moon and Eid celebrations commence with the sighting of the next new moon. Attempts to sight the new moon are observed all over the world and the exact date for the festival depends upon whether one follows local moon sightings in the UK or announcements based on moon sightings in Saudi Arabia. This is the reason why Muslim communities are not always able to agree in advance on one date for Eid.

At MCPA, pupils are entitled to one day's authorised absence from school when Eid-ul-Fitr/ Eid-ul-Adha falls on a school day. If it falls on a non-school day, pupils are not entitled to a day in lieu.

### **Muslim staff**

#### **Prayers**

Muslim members of staff may wish to offer their prayers during the school day, and so would appreciate time and a quiet space being made available. This facility is provided throughout the year for those who wish to observe their prayers and maintain consistency. The midday prayer (Zuhr) is likely to fall after 1:00pm at this time of year.

#### **Time off for Religious and Cultural Observance**

Teachers are allowed to take a day off work with pay for religious or cultural observance and LA policy is that all other school-based staff who work term-time only should be given the same opportunity. There is no entitlement to anything in lieu where religious festivals fall during school holidays or weekends.

### **Letter of consent**

#### **Re: Ramadan**

**10th February 2025**

Dear Parent and Carers,

As Ramadan is fast approaching, we would like to inform our families about the provisions we have in place to support our pupils at Manchester Communication Primary Academy.

We understand that some children in Years 4, 5 and 6 may be joining their friends and family in observing all or some of the fast for some/ all of the school day or week.

Therefore, if your child is in Year 4, 5 or 6 and you wish her/ him to observe all/ some of the fast then please complete the attached letter and return to school by **Monday 24th February 2025**.

The school will support pupils who, with their parents and carers' consent, wish to observe the fast for all/ part of the school day or week. Children will only be allowed to fast with their parents and carers' consent.

If your child wishes to fast at school and you agree with this, please complete and return the form below to your child's class teacher/ the main office by **Monday 24th February**. Please note that, unless we receive your consent for your child to fast at school, we will assume that he or she is not taking part. If we have concerns about your child's health, we will need to be able to contact you during the school day so please ensure that you provide the school with updated contact information.

**Our Eid school dinner will be on Tuesday 4th March / Friday 7th March.**

**Yours sincerely,  
Mr Reed**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of child .....** **Class.....**

<b><u>Please tick one option</u></b>	
My child will fast all of the school day, Monday to Friday, during Ramadan.	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child will fast in school on the following days during Ramadan (Please note which days here):	<input type="checkbox"/>
My child will fast for part of the school day (but will have a lunch everyday)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Additional information</b> (please let us know if your child will be fasting every day and you would like them to take a lunch home with them).	

Signed ..... Parent/guardian      Date .....

To be returned to the class teacher by **Monday 24th February**.  
School must have the names and contact details of two parents or carers.

**Contact Details**

Parent /Carer 1 Name ..... Phone no. ....  
Parent /Carer 2 Name..... Phone no. ....